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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the sixty-fourth session

Observer status for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa in the General Assembly

Note verbale dated 6 August 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General, and has the honour, in its capacity as Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa, to transmit the request for observer status for the organization in the General Assembly (see annex), which is addressed to the Secretary-General.

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Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 6 August 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

29 July 2009

On behalf of our respective Governments we have the honour, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to request the inclusion in the agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa in the General Assembly".

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa is an international and intergovernmental organization whose main objective is to provide a comprehensive framework for cooperation and collaboration to end violence and resolve intractable conflicts in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. It also aims at encouraging and promoting concrete measures to contribute to sustainable peace and stability in the region, by developing collaborative structures and subsidiary institutions to enhance cooperation with the African Union, the United Nations and the regional economic communities such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), among others. The current Executive Secretary of the Conference is Ambassador Liberata Mulamula.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum on the nature and description of the organization (see annex I) and the relevant draft resolution (see annex II) are attached to this letter.

We should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Teodolinda Rodrigues **Coelho**
Chargé d' affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Angola

(*Signed*) Zacharie **Gahutu**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi

(*Signed*) Fernand **Poukré-Kono**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic

(*Signed*) Justin **Biaboroh-Iboro** for Raymond Serge **Balé**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Congo

(*Signed*) Mr. Atoki **Ileka**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the
Democratic Republic of the Congo

(*Signed*) Grace W. **Cerere**
Chargé d' affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya

(*Signed*) Eugène-Richard **Gasana**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda

(*Signed*) Hassan Hamid **Hassan**
Chargé d' affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sudan

(*Signed*) Ruhakana **Rugunda**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda

(*Signed*) Augustine P. **Mahiga**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania

(*Signed*) Lazarus **Kapambwe**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

The decision to establish the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region was adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the 11 member States of the Great Lakes region. The intergovernmental organization comprises Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, the Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia. The Conference has co-opted member States of Egypt, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Ethiopia.

The history of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region dates back to the first phase that began in 1999 and culminated in the signing of the Dar es Salaam Declaration by the Heads of State and Government at the initiative of the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan in close collaboration with the African Union in 2004. The phase represented the dialogue and consultations leading to the adoption of the Dar es Salaam Declaration in November 2004 by the respective Heads of State and Government.

The Dar es Salaam Declaration takes cognizance of the genesis of the genocide in Rwanda and the wars of the African nations of the 1990s, to raise awareness that conflicts in the Great Lakes region had a regional dimension. People in the Great Lakes region are inter-linked; hence instability in one country easily affects neighbours. The Heads of State and Government recognized the need to seek a regional approach for sustainable peace and development, addressing the root causes of problems and finding perspectives for joint and peaceful development in the region. The Dar es Salaam Declaration saw the need to achieve this through an innovative approach to complement the ongoing national peace initiatives.

The period 2005-2006 formed the second phase, which basically constituted the preparation, adoption, and signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in December 2006. The pact gives and provides a legal framework governing relations between the member States to implement the Dar es Salaam Declaration, the protocols, programmes of action, the regional follow-up mechanism and the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development, to create conditions for security, stability, and sustainable development in the region. The overall objective of the Pact revolves around four key thematic areas, namely:

1. Peace and security with its five projects and two protocols.
2. Democracy and good governance with its four projects and five protocols.
3. Economic development and regional integration with its fifteen projects and one protocol.
4. Humanitarian and social issues with its seven projects and three protocols.

In total the Pact has 33 projects and 10 regional protocols.

Member States also incorporated cross-cutting issues such as gender, human rights, environment, human settlement and HIV/AIDS, into the framework.

To ensure implementation of the Pact, a Regional Follow-up Mechanism consisting of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, the Conference Secretariat, the National Coordination Mechanism and other collaborative Mechanisms were put in place. The Regional Follow-up Mechanism is based upon the principles of best practice, complimentarity, linkages and collegial ownership by the Member States, in cooperation with the African Union and the United Nations and other partners.

The Summit is the supreme organ of the Conference and it is chaired on rotational basis by a Head of State or Government of a member State. It meets once every two years and can convene an extraordinary Summit at the request of member States or upon majority consent of at least eight of the ratifying member States present and voting.

The Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee is the executive organ of the Conference. It meets in ordinary session twice a year.

In order to fulfil its mandate more effectively, the Heads of State and Government under Article 26 established the Secretariat as the technical arm of the Conference. It is headed by the Executive Secretary. In implementing the Pact and the decisions of the Summit and the Inter-Ministerial Committee and reporting on it, the Secretariat is charged with the following core tasks:

- Coordinate and ensure the functions of the Regional Follow-up Mechanism.
- Mobilize resources from partners, private sector and civil society.
- Build and maintain partnerships.
- Reinforce institutional capacities.
- Ensure the visibility of the Conference Secretariat.

It also organizes meetings of the Summit, the Inter-Ministerial Committee and of the other Conference structures and forums in addition to harmonizing the implementation of the Conference activities, as well as the decentralized and affiliated institutions and drawing up of programmes of activities and the budget of the Conference Secretariat, and ensuring the implementation after approval by the Inter-Ministerial Committee.

The major objective of the Conference is to transform the Great Lakes region into a space for:

- Sustainable peace and security.
- Political and social stability.
- Shared growth and development.
- Cooperation among the countries of the Great Lakes region.

In order to fulfil these objectives, four cluster areas have been targeted as follows:

(a) Peace and security

(b) Democracy and good governance

(c) Economic development and regional integration

(d) Humanitarian and social issues

Apart from the above-mentioned thematic areas, the Conference also addresses cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, human rights, human settlements and HIV/AIDS.

The Conference Secretariat is located in Bujumbura, and maintains a liaison office in Nairobi, Kenya. It is headed by an Executive Secretary and employs 11 international staff from 10 countries among the member States and 11 national staff from Burundi. The Secretariat is funded by the member States who make annual payments according to agreed formula to cover its running costs and is supported by international development partners and works closely with regional and international consultants. The Conference Secretariat has developed collaborative structures and subsidiary institutions by developing and promoting cooperation framework with the African Union, and the regional economic communities (CEMAC, CEPGL, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, IGAD and SADC).

Currently the Conference has observer status with the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission for Burundi. It seeks to collaborate with the United Nations to strengthen and enhance its scope of interactions.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa,

1. *Decides* to invite the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.